AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the

application:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method for recording interactions reflected in messages,
the method comprising the computer-implemented steps of:
      intercepting a message that has been sent from a first participant to a second
           participant prior to said message arriving at said second participant;
           wherein intercepting the message is performed by an intercepting device
                deployed between the first participant and the second participant,
                wherein the message is addressed to said second participant;
           wherein said message includes requestor identifier information and
                provider identifier information;
           wherein said intercepting device has access to the message and can
                interpret the identifier information contained within the message;
           wherein said first participant is one of a service requestor and a service
                provider and the second participant is the other of the service
                requestor and the service provider;
           wherein the intercepting device is managed by a third party that is different
                from said service requestor and said service provider
      determining the identity of the ~~first participant~~ service requestor based on said
           requestor identifier information in said message;
      determining the identity of the service provider based on said provider identifier
           information in said message;
      based on the intercepted message, software managed by the third party performing
           the steps of:
           determining whether said message has billing implications;

identifying, based on service identifying information contained in the

intercepted message, a service that is being requested by or

provided to said service requestor;

wherein the service identifying information includes data other

than said provider identifier information; and

if said message has billing implications, sending data to a billing service,

the data including information related to ~~the identity~~ 1) at least one

of said determined identities and 2) said service;

wherein the method is performed by one or more computers programmed to be

special purpose machines pursuant to instructions from program software.

2.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:

~~identifying, based on the intercepted message, a~~ determining that said service ~~that~~

is being or has been provided to said service requestor by said service

provider through, at least in part, the intercepted message;

wherein sending data to said billing service occurs in response to said determining

that said service is being or has been provided to said service requestor by

said service provider through, at least in part, the intercepted message ~~and~~

~~in response to identifying, based on the intercepted message, that the service is~~

~~being or has been provided, billing one of the service requestor or service~~

~~provider for said service~~.

3.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~ 1 wherein:

the third party performs the step of billing on behalf of the ~~the~~ service provider.

4.   (Currently Amended) The method for Claim 73 further comprising the computer-
implemented step of:

using said log to charge a particular participant for ~~a~~ said service ~~indicated in the~~

~~message~~, wherein said particular participant is one of said first participant

and said second participant.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended) The method for Claim 73 wherein the log includes information to indicate how much the ~~particular~~ first participant or the second participant is to pay for the service.

7. (Previously Presented) The method for Claim 73 further comprising the computer-implemented step of:

    reading a plurality of logs, including said log, at an aggregation engine that places access information contained in said plurality of logs into the format required by a billing system.

8. (Currently Amended) The method for Claim ~~2~~ 1 further comprises:

    determining that ~~the~~ a particular participant of the first participant and second participant must pre-pay for the service;

    determining whether the particular participant has sufficient funds to pay for the service; and

    determining how to handle said message based on whether said particular participant has sufficient funds to pay for the service.

9. (Currently Amended) The method for Claim ~~2~~ 1 further comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

    inspecting one of a provider profile associated with the service provider or a requestor profile associated with the service requestor; and

    based on the provider profile or the requestor profile, determining that the service requestor must pre-pay for the service.

10. (Canceled)

11.   (Currently Amended) The method for Claim ~~2~~ 1 further wherein the message is a response from the service provider and includes a price at which the service provider is willing to provide the service.

12.   (Currently Amended) The method for Claim ~~2~~ 1 wherein the service involves providing content from the service provider.

13.   (Canceled)

14.   (Canceled)

15.   (Currently Amended) The method for Claim ~~2~~ 1 further comprising the step of updating a service requestor profile based on the service that is requested.

16.   (Currently Amended) The method for Claim ~~2~~ 1 further comprising the step of decrementing an account balance of the <u>first participant or second</u> ~~particular~~ participant when the service requestor accesses the service.

17.   (Canceled)

18.   (Original) The method for Claim 1 further comprising the computer-implemented step of:
      locating a profile based on the identity of the first participant.

19–24. (Canceled)

25.   (Original) The method for Claim 18 further comprising updating the profile to award the service requestor a prize for having requested said service.

26–28. (Canceled)

29.   (Previously Presented) The method for Claim 1 further comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

        if the service requestor requires pre-authorization for a service, then

                sending the service requestor a payment authorization request message;

                        and

        if the service requestor authorizes payment for the service, then

                retransmitting the message to the service provider to obtain the service for the service requestor.

30.   (Original) The method for Claim 29 further comprising inspecting a profile to determine whether the service requestor requires pre-authorization for the service.

31.   (Original) The method for Claim 1 further comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

        determining whether the service requestor has funds to pay for a service based on an authorization source.

32.   (Original) The method for Claim 31 further comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

        if the service requestor has the funds, then

                causing the funds to be decremented from a requestor account associated with the service requestor; and

                retransmitting the message to the service provider to obtain the service for the service requestor.

33.   (Previously Presented) The method for Claim 31 wherein the authorization source is one of a profile, a billing system, and a billing scheme of an access provider.

34.   (Canceled)

35.   (Canceled)

36.   (Original) The method for Claim 1 further comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

       determining whether the service provider is an authorized partner; and

       if the service provider is an authorized partner, then

              retransmitting the message to the service provider to obtain a service.

37.   (Original) The method for Claim 36 wherein the step of determining whether the service provider is an approved partner further comprises the computer-implemented steps of:

       determining whether the service involves a fee by inspecting a provider profile;

       if the service does involve a fee, then

              establishing a secure connection with the provider; and

              authenticating the service provider by using an authentication mechanism.

38.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform for performing the steps of:

       intercepting a message that has been sent from a first participant to a second

              participant prior to said message arriving at said second participant;

              wherein intercepting the message is performed by an intercepting device

                     deployed between the first participant and the second participant,

                     wherein the message is addressed to said second participant;

              wherein said message includes requestor identifier information and

                     provider identifier information;

              wherein said intercepting device has access to the message and can

                     interpret the identifier information contained within the message;

wherein said first participant is one of a service requestor and a service

provider and the second participant is the other of the service

requestor and the service provider;

wherein the intercepting device is managed by a third party that is different

from said service requestor and said service provider

determining the identity of the ~~first participant~~ service requestor based on said

requestor identifier information in said message;

determining the identity of the service provider based on said provider identifier

information in said message;

based on the intercepted message, software managed by the third party performing

the steps of:

determining whether said message has billing implications;

identifying, based on service identifying information contained in the

intercepted message, a service that is being requested by or

provided to said service requestor;

wherein the service identifying information includes data other

than said provider identifier information; and

if said message has billing implications, sending data to a billing service,

the data including information related to ~~the identity~~ 1) at least one

of said determined identities and 2) said service.

39.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 84 further

~~comprising instructions for~~ storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when

executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the

step of:

using said log to charge a particular participant for ~~a~~ said service ~~indicated in the~~

~~message~~, wherein said particular participant is one of said first participant

and said second participant.

40.   (Canceled)

41.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 84 wherein the log includes information to indicate how much the <u>first participant or second</u> ~~particular~~ participant is to pay for the service.

42.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 84 further ~~comprising instructions for~~ <u>storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of</u> reading a plurality of logs, including said log, at an aggregation engine that places access information contained in said plurality of logs into the format required by a billing system.

43.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim ~~88~~ <u>38</u> further ~~comprising instructions for~~ <u>storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of</u>:

     determining that ~~the~~ <u>a</u> particular participant <u>of the first participant and second participant</u> must pre-pay for the service;

     determining whether the particular participant has sufficient funds to pay for the service; and

     determining how to handle said message based on whether said particular participant has sufficient funds to pay for the service.

44.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim ~~88~~ <u>38</u> further ~~comprising instructions for~~ <u>storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of</u>:

     inspecting one of a provider profile associated with the service provider or a requestor profile associated with the service requestor; and

based on the provider profile or the requestor profile, determining that the service requestor must pre-pay for the service.

45.   (Canceled)

46.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim ~~88~~ 38 wherein the message is a response from the service provider and includes a price at which the service provider is willing to provide the service.

47.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim ~~88~~ 38 wherein the service involves providing content from the service provider.

48.   (Canceled)

49.   (Canceled)

50.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim ~~88~~ 38 further ~~comprising instructions for~~ storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of updating a service requestor profile based on the service that is requested.

51.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim ~~88~~ 38 further ~~comprising instructions for~~ storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of decrementing an account balance of the first participant or second ~~particular~~ participant when the service requestor accesses the service.

52.   (Canceled)

53.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38 further ~~comprising instructions for~~ storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when

executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of:

locating a profile based on the identity of the first participant.

54–59. (Canceled)

60.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 53 further comprising instructions for storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of updating the profile to award the service requestor a prize for having requested said service.

61–63. (Canceled)

64.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38 further comprising instructions for storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of:

if the service requestor requires pre-authorization for a service, then

sending the service requestor a payment authorization request message;

and

if the service requestor authorizes payment for the service, then

retransmitting the message to the service provider to obtain the service for the service requestor.

65.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 64 further comprising instructions for storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of inspecting a profile to determine whether the service requestor requires pre-authorization for the service.

66.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38 further ~~comprising instructions for~~ storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of:

>   determining whether the service requestor has funds to pay for a service based on an authorization source.

67.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 66 further ~~comprising instructions for~~ storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of:

>   if the service requestor has the funds, then
>
>>   causing the funds to be decremented from a requestor account associated with the service requestor; and
>>
>>   retransmitting the message to the service provider to obtain the service for the service requestor.

68.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 66 wherein the authorization source is one of a profile, a billing system, and a billing scheme of an access provider.

69.   (Canceled)

70.   (Canceled)

71.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38 further ~~comprising instructions for~~ storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of:

>   determining whether the service provider is an authorized partner; and

if the service provider is an authorized partner, then

retransmitting the message to the service provider to obtain a service.

72.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 71 wherein instructions for determining whether the service provider is an approved partner further ~~comprising instructions for~~ comprise one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the step of:

determining whether the service involves a fee by inspecting a provider profile;

if the service does involve a fee, then

establishing a secure connection with the provider; and

authenticating the service provider by using an authentication mechanism.

73.   (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

at the intercepting device, generating a log of said message;

wherein the data sent to the billing service is based on the log.

74.   (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 73, wherein:

the software managed by the third party is executed by the intercepting device; and

generating the log of said message occurs in response to the software determining that the message has billing implications.

75.   (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 73, wherein:

the intercepting device generates the log without determining whether the message has billing implications; and

determining whether the message has billing implications further comprises analyzing the log of said message.

76.   (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 75, further comprising, at an aggregation engine external to the intercepting device, reading the log, wherein the software managed by the third party executes at an aggregation engine.

77.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim ~~2~~ 1, further comprising billing the service provider for providing the service.

78.   (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method for providing access to content, the method comprising:

> at an intercepting device deployed between a client and a provider:
>> intercepting a message originating from the client and directed to the provider;
>>> wherein the message comprises a request for a first service provided at a server operated by the provider;
>>> wherein the message includes an address associated with the client;
>>> wherein the intercepting device intercepts the message prior to the provider receiving the message;
>> based at least on the address, determining an identity associated with the client;
>> based at least on the identity, determining a class of service to which a user associated with the identity is entitled;
>> based on the class of service, ~~selecting one of the following actions: (1) refusing to transmit the request to the provider; (2)~~ transmitting a modified request to the provider;
>> ~~performing the selected action~~
> wherein the method is performed by one or more computers programmed to be special purpose machines pursuant to instructions from program software.

79–80. (Canceled)

81.   (Currently Amended) The method of Claim 78, ~~wherein the selected action is transmitting a modified request to the provider,~~ wherein transmitting the modified request comprises:

      based at least on the class of service, determining a particular service to which the user is entitled;

      generating a modified request for the particular service based on the request for the first service;

      transmitting the modified request for the particular service to the provider.

82.   (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 81, wherein the particular service is different than the first service.

83.   (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 78, wherein determining the class of service further comprises determining whether the client has funds to pay for a particular service based on an authorization source.

84.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38, further storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform:

      at the intercepting device, generating a log of said message;

        wherein the data sent to the billing service is based on the log.

85.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 84, wherein:

      the software managed by the third party is executed by the intercepting device; and

      generating the log of said message occurs in response to the software determining that the message has billing implications.

86.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 84, wherein:

       the intercepting device generates the log without determining whether the message has billing implications; and

       determining whether the message has billing implications further comprises analyzing the log of said message.

87.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 86, further storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform:

       at an aggregation engine external to the intercepting device, reading the log, wherein the software managed by the third party executes at an aggregation engine.

88.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38, further storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform:

       identifying, based on the intercepted message, a determining that said service that is being or has been provided to said service requestor by said service provider through, at least in part, the intercepted message;

       wherein sending data to said billing service occurs in response to said determining that said service is being or has been provided to said service requestor by said service provider through, at least in part, the intercepted message and in response to identifying, based on the intercepted message, that the service is being or has been provided, billing one of the service requestor or service provider for said service.

89.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 88, further storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform:

billing the service provider for providing the service.

90.   (Previously Presented) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 78.

91–92. (Canceled)

93.   (Previously Presented) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 81.

94.   (Previously Presented) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 82.

95.   (Previously Presented) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 83.

96.   (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein said first participant is the service provider and the second participant is the service requestor.

97.   (New) The method of Claim 1, wherein the provider identifier information and the service identifying information are contained in a single URL associated with the message.

98.   (New) The method of Claim 97, wherein the provider identifier information corresponds to an IP address and wherein the service identifying information includes at least a path in said single URL.

99.   (New) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38, wherein said first participant is the service provider and the second participant is the service requestor.

100.   (New) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38, wherein the provider identifier information and the service identifying information are contained in a single URL associated with the message.

101.   (New) The computer-readable storage medium of Claim 38, wherein the provider identifier information corresponds to an IP address and wherein the service identifying information includes at least a path in said single URL.

102.   (New) A method for providing access to content, comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

    at an intercepting device deployed between a client and a provider:

        intercepting a message originating from the client and directed to the provider;

            wherein the message comprises a request for content provided at a server operated by the provider;

            wherein the message includes an address associated with the client;

            wherein the intercepting device intercepts the message prior to the provider receiving the message;

        based at least on the address, determining a user profile associated with the client;

        based at least on the user profile, modifying said request to include information from said user profile;

        transmitting the modified request to the provider; and

      wherein the method is performed by one or more computers programmed to be special purpose machines pursuant to instructions from program software.

103.   (New) The method of Claim 102, wherein the method is performed by software managed by a third party at the intercepting device, wherein the third party is a party other than the client or the provider.

104.   (New) The method of Claim 102, wherein the third party is an access provider for said client.

105.   (New) The method of Claim 102, wherein modifying said request to include information from said user profile includes modifying said request to include data indicating a current location of the client.

106.   (New) The method of Claim 102, wherein modifying said request to include information from said user profile includes modifying said request to include data indicating at least one of billing information or a class of service indicated in said user profile.

107.   (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 102.

108.   (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 103.

109.   (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 104.

110.   (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 105.

111.   (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 106.

112.   (New) The method of Claim 78, wherein:

the request is addressed to a first URL for the first service;

the modified request is addressed to a second URL associated with the class of
service; and

the first URL is not identical to the second URL.

113.   (New) The method of Claim 78, wherein the method is performed by software managed by a third party at the intercepting device, wherein the third party is a party other than the client or the provider.

114.   (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 112.

115.   (New) A computer-readable storage medium storing one or more sequences of instructions which, when executed by one or more processors, causes the one or more processors to perform the method recited in Claim 113.